WAR, THE LIBERATOR

E. Alan Mackintosh.

WAR, THE LIBERATOR
AND OTHER PIECES BY
E. A. MACKINTOSH, M.C.
LT. SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS (51ST DIVISION)
WITH A MEMOIR

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TO SYLVIA

Two months ago the skies were blue,
The fields were fresh and green,
And green the willow tree stood up,
With the lazy stream between.

Two months ago we sat and watched
The river drifting by—
And now—you're back at your work again
And here in a ditch I lie.

God knows—my dear—I did not want
To rise and leave you so,
But the dead men's hands were beckoning
And I knew that I must go.

The dead men's eyes were watching, lass,
Their lips were asking too,
We faced it out and payed the price—
Are we betrayed by you?

The days are long between, dear lass,
Before we meet again,
Long days of mud and work for me,
For you long care and pain.

But you'll forgive me yet, my dear,
Because of what you know,
I can look my dead friends in the face
As I couldn't two months ago.

October 20th, 1917

MEMOIR

EWART ALAN MACKINTOSH

THE only surviving son of the late Alexander Mackintosh, formerly of Teaninich House, Alness, Ross-shire, Alan Mackintosh was born on 4th March 1893 at Brighton. He was the grandson of Dr Guinness Rogers. He received his early education at Brighton College, from which he won a scholarship at St Paul's, going straight into the Middle VIIIth. He was already a writer of verses, and for a period he edited the *Pauline*. Two years later, in October 1912, he came to Christ Church as a Classical Scholar. At Christmas 1914 he joined the 5th Seaforths as a subaltern, and after training at Golspie he crossed to France with his battalion in July 1915, and bore his share of fighting. In May 1916 he carried out a successful raid, which was described in the Press at the time, and which brought him the Military Cross. He returned to England in August 1916, having been wounded and gassed at High Wood. For eight months he taught bombing to the corps of cadets

at Cambridge; and while at Cambridge he became engaged to Sylvia Marsh, daughter of a Quaker family. with whose traditions and ideals he had much in common. They planned to make their home in New Zealand. In October last he returned to France, joining the 4th Battalion of the Seaforths, and on 21st November, in the fighting about Cambrai, he fell, shot through the head.

Alan Mackintosh looked the Gael he was, loose-limbed, muscular, tall and dark. He carried a fine head well. His roving eye, merry, tender, cautious, penetrating, bold by rapid turns, epitomised the richness of his nature and his still rarer force of self-expression.

He spent two happy years at Oxford. For study, and especially the routine study of the schools, he cared little. Native power and a felicitous exuberance in literary things gained him his place in honour classical moderations. He played with Socialism, to the point of having scruples about the possession of wealth. He read poetry enthusiastically, and notably French poetry, in which his *répertoire* was very large. Both in term and out of term he cultivated, above all, the sentiments and the arts of the Highlands. He learned to play the pipes and to speak Gaelic, things which later endeared him to his regiment. His friendships were many and ardent. Of

his bosom friends, Andrew Fraser of Christ Church was reported wounded and missing in the same Cambrai fighting, E. J. Solomon of Exeter College, who is commemorated in "Gold Braid," was killed in August 1917, while Ian M'Kenzie of Balliol has fallen in the present battle.

In the army the Gael in him, artist and man, ripened quickly. With growing strength and health he grew in the control and the use of his own powers and in influence over other men. He cherished political ambitions, whether to be fulfilled in the Colony or in England he scarcely knew. As a soldier he united brilliant courage with gentleness, and humour with resolution. His vivid and affectionate nature remained undulled through the years of warfare.

The present volume contains a number of pieces, some early and some late, which the author, had he lived, might have omitted. His many friends, and those who will know him only through his two books, will alike feel that from a last volume as little as need be should be excluded. It is difficult for one who knew him very intimately to estimate his work, for in each poem the author's personality speaks with engaging and engrossing clearness. There is much in this volume and in "A Highland Regiment" (1917) that is already peculiarly complete and rounded in idea and also finished in form. There

is much, too, of great promise. "The Remembered Gods," which was written at Oxford, shows his poetic power with the great spaces, the long-ranging time, the brooding significance which are as a home to the highland imagination. In this direction, perhaps, his work might have developed notably. The shorter pieces exhibit remarkable concentration of mood and mastery of technique. The keynote varies: here the lightest play of fancy, there the broadly comic, again a haunting pain, sentiment, reverie, grimness, and unforced irony, but everywhere melody and sure movement and a delicate rightness. The war pieces, unlike many that have been written since 1914, evade the circumstance and horror of war. There is strangely little, indeed, about the war in any of them, but much about the minds and hearts of those who wage it. There shines through them a very triumph over war. This much loved gallant poet is of those whose living martyrdom rises whole-souled above the storm of violence and is humanity's true victory. And not that martyrdom only.

JOHN MURRAY

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD

April 1918

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I

WAR, THE LIBERATOR

WAR, THE LIBERATOR

(To the Authoress of "Non-combatants")

SURELY War is vile to you, you who can but know of it,
Broken men and broken hearts, and boys too young to die,
You that never knew its joy, never felt the glow of it,
Valour and the pride of men, soaring to the sky.
Death's a fearful thing to you, terrible in suddenness,
Lips that will not laugh again, tongues that will not sing,
You that have not ever seen their sudden life of happiness,
The moment they looked down on death, a cowed and beaten thing.

Say what life would theirs have been, that it should make you weep for them,
A small grey world imprisoning the wings of their desire?
Happier than they could tell who knew not life would keep for them
Fragments of the high Romance, the old Heroic fire.

All they dreamed of childishly, bravery and fame for them,
Charges at the cannon's mouth, enemies they slew,
Bright across the waking world their romances came for them,
Is not life a little price when our dreams come true ?

All the terrors of the night, doubts and thoughts tormenting us
Boy-minds painting quiveringly the awful face of fear,
These are gone for ever now, truth is come contenting us,
Night with all its tricks is gone and our eyes are clear.
Now in all the time to come, memory will cover us,
Trenches that we did not lose, charges that we made,
Since a voice, when first we heard shells go shrilling over us,
Said within us, " This is Death—and I am not afraid ! "

Since we felt our spirits tower, smiling and contemptuous,
O'er the little frightened things, running to and fro,
Looked on Death and saw a slave blustering and presumptuous,
Daring vainly still to bring Man his master low.
Though we knew that at the last, he would have his lust of us,
Carelessly we braved his might. felt and knew not why
Something stronger than ourselves, moving in the dust of us,
Something in the Soul of Man still too great to die.

RECRUITING

"LADS, you're wanted, go and help,"
On the railway carriage wall
Stuck the poster, and I thought
Of the hands that penned the call.

Fat civilians wishing they
"Could go out and fight the Hun."
Can't you see them thanking God
That they're over forty-one?

Girls with feathers, vulgar songs—
Washy verse on England's need—
God—and don't we damned well know
How the message ought to read.

"Lads, you're wanted! over there,"
Shiver in the morning dew,
More poor devils like yourselves
Waiting to be killed by you.

Go and help to swell the names
In the casualty lists.
Help to make a column's stuff
For the blasted journalists.

Help to keep them nice and safe
From the wicked German foe.
Don't let him come over here !
" Lads, you're wanted—out you go."

. . . . .

There's a better word than that,
Lads, and can't you hear it come
From a million men that call
You to share their martyrdom.

Leave the harlots still to sing
Comic songs about the Hun,
Leave the fat old men to say
Now *we've* got them on the run.

Better twenty honest years
Than their dull three score and ten.
Lads, you're wanted. Come and learn
To live and die with honest men.

You shall learn what men can do
If you will but pay the price,
Learn the gaiety and strength
In the gallant sacrifice.

Take your risk of life and death
Underneath the open sky.
Live clean or go out quick—
Lads, you're wanted. Come and die.

THE GERMAN AND THE GAEL

WHEN they go out to battle
They march with pomp and show,
And all the fruits of victory
Before them as they go.
Because they dream the fight is theirs,
Therefore they will not flee,
But we go darkly out to meet
The fate we cannot see.

Their officers and generals
Have nourished them with lies,
And waved the torch of victory
Before their blinded eyes.
But we go grimly forward,
Believing—come what may,
We shall not tread the grass again
Nor see another day.

Not for the hope of glory,
Nor for desire of loot,
Not for the pride of conquest,
Nor dream of wild pursuit;
But because ancient battles
Stir in our memory,
Hopeless as went our fathers
And stern as they, go we.

Maybe that we shall drive them,
Maybe we fight in vain,
We care not now our fathers
Are born in us again.
When the old voices called us
We heard them and obeyed,
Whether we die or conquer
We have not been afraid.

BEAUMONT-HAMEL

Captured, November 16th, 1916

1

DEAD men at Beaumont
In the mud and rain,
You that were so warm once,
Flesh and blood and brain,
You've made an end of dying,
Hurts and cold and crying,
And all but quiet lying
Easeful after pain.

2

Dead men at Beaumont,
Do you dream at all
When the leaves of summer
Ripen to their fall ?

Will you walk the heather,
Feel the Northern weather,
Wind and sun together,
Hear the grouse-cock call ?

3

Maybe in the night-time
A shepherd boy will see
Dead men, and ghastly,
Kilted to the knee,
Fresh from new blood-shedding,
With airy footsteps treading,
Hill and field and steading,
Where they used to be.

4

Nay, not so I see you,
Dead friends of mine ;
But like a dying pibroch
From the battle-line
I hear your laughter ringing,
And the sweet songs you're singing,
And the keen words winging
Across the smoke and wine.

5

So we still shall see you,
Be it peace or war,
Still in all adventures
You shall go before,
And our children dreaming,
Shall see your bayonets gleaming,
Scotland's warriors streaming
Forward evermore.

FAREWELL

To Sergeant H. Fraser and L.-Sergeant G. M'Kay

WELL, you have gone now, comrades,
And I shall see no more
The gallant friendly faces
Framed in my dug-out door.
I had no words to tell you
The things I longed to say,
But the company is empty
Since you have gone away.

The company is filled now
With faces strange to see,
And scarce a man of the old men
That lived and fought with me.
I know the drafts are good men,
I know they're doing well,
But they're not the men I slept with
Those nights at La Boiselle.

Oh, the old days of friendship
We shall not see again,
The bitter winter trenches
And the marches in the rain.
Bécourt, Authuille, Thiepval,
Henancourt, Avelay,
Their names are keys that open
Remembered doors to me.

Doors that will open never
Upon this tortured land.
I shall not see you ever,
Or take you by the hand.
Only for ancient friendship,
For all the times we knew,
Maybe you will remember
As I remember you.

THREE BATTLES

To the 51st Division

High Wood, *July-August* 1916

OH gay were we in spirit
In the hours of the night
When we lay in rest by Albert
And waited for the fight;
Gay and gallant were we
On the day that we set forth,
But broken, broken, broken
Is the valour of the North.

The wild warpipes were calling,
Our hearts were blithe and free
When we went up the valley
To the death we could not see.
Clear lay the wood before us
In the clear summer weather,

But broken, broken, broken
Are the sons of the heather.

In the cold of the morning,
In the burning of the day,
The thin lines stumbled forward,
The dead and dying lay.
By the unseen death that caught us
By the bullets' raging hail
Broken, broken, broken
Is the pride of the Gael.

BEAUMONT-HAMEL, *November 16th*, 1916

BUT the North shall arise
Yet again in its strength;
Blood calling for blood
Shall be feasted at length.
For the dead men that lie
Underneath the hard skies,
For battle, for vengeance
The North shall arise.

In the cold of the morning
A grey mist was drawn

Over the waves
That went up in the dawn,
Went up like the waves
Of the wild Northern sea;
For the North has arisen.
The North has broke free.

Ghosts of the heroes
That died in the wood,
Looked on the killing
And saw it was good.
Far over the hillsides
They saw in their dream
The kilted men charging,
The bayonets gleam.

By the cries we had heard,
By the things we had seen,
By the vengeance we took
In the bloody ravine,
By the men that we slew
In the mud and the rain,
The pride of the North
Has arisen again.

VICTORY AND FAILURE

ARRAS, *April 9th*
ROEUX, *April 23rd*, 1917

NOT for the day of victory
I mourn I was not there,
The hard fierce rush of slaying men,
The hands up in the air,
But for the torn ranks struggling on
The old brave hopeless way,
The broken charge, the slow retreat,
And I so far away.

And listening to the tale of Roeux
I think I see again
The steady grim despairing ranks,
The courage and the pain,
The bodies of my friends that lie
Unburied in the dew—
Oh! friends of mine, and I not there
To die along with you.

FROM HOME

To the Men who fell at Beaumont-Hamel

November 13th, 1916

THE pale sun woke in the eastern sky
And a veil of mist was drawn
Over the faces of death and fame
When you went up in the dawn.
With never a thought of fame or death,
Only the work to do,
When you went over the top, my friends,
And I not there with you.

The veil is rent with a rifle-flash
And shows me plain to see
Battle and bodies of men that lived
And fought along with me.
Oh God ! it would not have been so hard
If I'd been in it too,

But you are lying stiff, my friends,
And I not there with you.

So here I sit in a pleasant room
By a comfortable fire,
With every thing that a man could want,
But not the heart's desire.
So I sit thinking and dreaming still,
A dream that won't come true,
Of you in the German trench, my friends,
And I not there with you.

FROM HOME

Cambridge

HERE there is peace and easy living,
And a warm fire when the rain is driving,
There is no sound of strong men striving,
Here where the quiet waters flow,
But I am hearing the bullets ringing,
Hearing the great shells onward winging,
The dead men's voices are singing, singing,
And I must rise and go.

Here there is ease and comfort for me,
A warm soft bed and a good roof o'er me
Here may be there is fame before me,
Honour and fame for all I know,
But I am seeing the thick rain falling,
Seeing the tired patrols out crawling,
The dead men's voices are calling, calling,
And I must rise and go.

Back to the trench that I see so clearly,
Back to the fight I can see so nearly,
Back to the friends that I love so dearly,
The dead men lying amid the dew,
The droning sound of the great shells flying,
Filth and honour, and pain, and dying—
Dead friends of mine, oh, cease your crying,
For I come back to you.

THE DEAD MEN

IT was yesterday I heard again
The dead man talk with living men,
And watched the thread of converse go
Among the speakers to and fro,
Woven with merriment and wit
And beauty to embroider it ;
And in the middle now and then,
The laughter clear of happy men—
Only to me a charnel scent
Drifted across the argument,
Only to me his fair young head
Was lifeless and untenanted,
And in his quiet even tones,
I heard the sound of naked bones,
And in his empty eyes could see
The man who talked was dead, like me.

Then in the conversation's swim,
I leaned across and spoke to him,

And in his dim and dreary eyes
Read suddenly a strange surprise,
And in the touch of his dank hand,
Knew that he too could understand ;
So we two talked, and as we heard
Our friends' applause of each dull word
We felt the slow and mournful winds
Blow through the corpse house of our minds,
And the cool dark of underground.
And all the while they sat around
Weighing each listless thing we said,
And did not know that we were dead.

THE SHIP OF THE SOUL

To E. J. S.

1

LONG ago in the dawn of nations
Wisdom in Egypt dreamed a dream,
The ship of the soul of man a-sailing
Over the Nile's god-haunted stream.
Tired the travellers young and aged
Voyaging in from near and far,
Swift and surely the strong oars bore them
Down to the glorious feet of Ra.

2

Dust is wisdom, its dream forgotten,
But still in the light of the setting sun
The ships of the souls of men go seeking
The harbour that waits for everyone;

Still in the current the strong oars quiver
In changing rapids the light boats roll,
Quiet is Nile, but on life's broad river
Still puts forth the ship of the soul.

3

Ship after ship puts into harbour,
Little bright towns by the riverside,
And there is joy and feasting and dancing
And fair glad maidens starry-eyed,
One by one do the ships drop anchor,
One by one in the roads they lie,
Each one comes to his own home harbour,
Every one but you and I.

4

Why can we not stay ? we that are wanting
Nothing more than the others are,
A wife by the fire and a hearth to warm us,
Anchorage safe in the harbour far.
But in the midst of feasting and loving,
Soft as the touch of a wizard's wand,
The wind and the sound of the water call us,
" Come, there are better things beyond."

5

Others may find their loves and keep them,
But for us two there still shall be
A kinder heart and a fairer city,
The home and wife we shall never see.
Lost adventurers, watching ever
Over the toss of the tricksy foam,
Many a joyous port and city,
Never the harbour lights of home.

GHOSTS OF WAR

(Sent from France in October 1917)

WHEN you and I are buried
With grasses over head,
The memory of our fights will stand
Above this bare and tortured land,
We knew ere we were dead.

Though grasses grow on Vimy,
And poppies at Messines,
And in High Wood the children play,
The craters and the graves will stay
To show what things have been.

Though all be quiet in day-time,
The night shall bring a change,
And peasants walking home shall see
Shell-torn meadow and riven tree,
And their own fields grown strange.

They shall hear live men crying,
They shall see dead men lie,
Shall hear the rattling Maxims fire,
And see by broken twists of wire
Gold flares light up the sky.

And in their new-built houses
The frightened folk will see
Pale bombers coming down the street,
And hear the flurry of charging feet,
And the crash of Victory.

This is our Earth baptizèd
With the red wine of War.
Horror and courage hand in hand
Shall brood upon the stricken land
In silence evermore.

MINES

(Sent from France in November 1917)

WHAT are you doing, Sentry,
Fresh-faced and brown?
Waiting for the mines, Sir,
Sitting on the mines, Sir,
Just to keep them down.
Mines going up, and no one to tell for us
Where it will be, and may be it's as well for us,
Mines going up. Oh! God, but it's hell for us,
Here with the bloody mines.

What are you doing, Sentry,
Cold and drawn and grey?
Listening to them tap, Sir,
Same old tap, tap, tap, Sir,
And praying for the day.

Mines going up, and no one can say for us
When it will be ; but they waiting some day for us.
Mines going up—oh ! folk at home, pray for us
Here with the bloody mines.

Where are you lying, Sentry ?
Wasn't this your place ?
Down below your feet, Sir,
Below your heavy feet, Sir,
With earth upon my face.

Mines gone up, and the earth and the clod on us—
Fighting for breath—and our own comrades trod on us.
Mines gone up—Have pity, oh God ! on us,
Down in the bloody mines.

DEATH

BECAUSE I have made light of death
And mocked at wounds and pain,
The doom is laid on me to die—
Like the humble men in days gone by—
That angered me to hear them cry
For pity to me in vain.

I shall not go out suddenly
As many a man has done.
But I shall lie as those men lay—
Longing for death the whole long day—
Praying, as I heard those men pray,
And none shall heed me, none.

The fierce waves will go surging on
Before they tend to me.
Oh, God of battles I pray you send
No word of pity—no help, no friend,
That if my spirit break at the end
None may be there to see.

II

OTHER POEMS AND THE REMEMBERED GODS

TO THE UNKNOWN LOVE

A DAY ago, quite suddenly,
Hell opened all its gulf to me,
I could not tell what I must do,
And so I tried to think of you,
And hoped that I might see your eyes
Just for a moment, and be wise.
But you were looking far away
Upon a green and crimson spray,
The rose-tree flung across your way.
And with the perfect sight of you
The blossom took a braver hue,
And sucked your wisdom like the dew,
Your beauty like a summer shower.
Never before was any flower
So fair and wise as was this rose
With seeing you.
And yet, who knows,

If I had seen your dear grave eyes,
Which made the little flower so wise,
Just for a moment ere I fell,
Perhaps I had been wise as well.

SONNET TO THE UNKNOWN LOVE

ACROSS a hundred miles of weary land,
To your dear home by our beloved sea,
I strain my eyes and think I see you stand
The same sweet wonder that you used to be.
I think I see you smile the very way
You had when once we walked across the Downs,
And on the muddy road palm branches lay
And the dull trees were garlanded with crowns.

I see the opening of your grave eyes,
And the swift flash when you reveal your heart,
And still between us all this distance lies
Of space and custom keeping us apart,
And still twelve lonely days and nights remain
Ere I shall see and talk to you again.

SONG

OH, come to me, come to me, bringing
The gifts that you brought me of old,
A world that will set me singing,
And a touch that will make me bold.
The world is too hard for my sorrow,
But it will grow soft to your feet,
But though you must leave me to-morrow,
To-night let your coming be fleet.

Oh, come to me, come to me, leaving
The thought that would keep you away,
For the heart of your lover is grieving
In the midst of the beauty of May.
For the sorrows that hold me and bind me
When the blossom is fresh on the bough,
And the mists of illusion that blind me,
Oh, come to me, come to me, now.

Oh, come to me, come to me, over
The miles that would keep us apart,
Though far from the eyes of your lover,
At least you may visit his heart.
In the night-time, when lovers are nearest,
In dreams like a wandering fay,
Oh, come to me, come to me, dearest,
Although you must fly with the day.

THE GHOST OF YOUTH

IN the cold black hours of the evening time
That finish the empty day,
When a man can sit and dream again
Of the joys he threw away.
When the curtain of things is lifted up
And the naked life we see,
There comes the ghost of a boy, long dead,
And sits by the fire with me.

A boy with the clean young hope of life
Aflame in his ardent eyes,
And oh, the contempt that he feels for me
And my hoary blasphemies;
Sitting there by my dying fire
His eyes light up and glow,
And he talks to me as I used to talk
Oh God! how long ago.

The ghost of the boy that I was then
Sits still and talks to me
With his passionate love of a half-seen truth
And his sweet absurdity.
All that I thought I could nearly see
All that I used to hear,
Before the curtain was rent and I saw
The naked life too clear.

Ere I saw too clear the awful fear
And the horror of emptiness,
Ere I knew too well that the pit of hell
Was a pit that was bottomless,
And knew there was never a king in hell,
In heaven never a throne,
Only the void and a shivering soul,
That drifts by itself alone.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

CALUM, IAN, *Shepherds.*

LIOR, *God of the Sea.*

BALOR, *God of War.*

ANGUS, *God of Love.*

ALASTAIR, *a young stranger.*

MAIRI, *daughter of Ian.*

DEDICATION

If in my song the heart of love
  Looks from another maiden's eyes,
Where on the hills of Morven move
  The kings too proud for Paradise;
Though to your ears the autumn brings
  No sounds of crying, you will know
The murmur of immortal things
  In this dark tale of long ago.

If in the silence of the nights
  The song of Angus calls no more,
If all the sea is ringed with lights
  And no waves moaning on the shore.
Though Balor, sleeping on the hills,
  Forgets the dew in his drenched hair,
You will remember ancient ills,
  Pitying another Alastair.

THE REMEMBERED GODS

TIME : *A long time ago.*

SCENE : *A glen in Morven in the West Highlands, with big stones scattered. Behind, a big ben. The stage is dark, but in the middle a tall tree shows blacker. Beneath it sits* ANGUS *in a wreath of mist.*

ANGUS (*sings*).

Are the gods forgotten in Morven of the hinds,
The beauty that slew men, the golden eyes that shone,
The gods that would be walking on the rocks of the winds,
That little men would die for the love of looking on ?

Are the gods forgotten in Morven of the stags,
The old gods, the fair gods, that were too high for love,
The white feet pressing on the grasses of the crags,
The black hair hidden in the black clouds above ?

The gods are forgotten in Morven of the glens.
The sun shines clearly, and gentle is the day.

Like snow in summer corries, like mist upon the bens,
The lovely gods of darkness are vanished away.

[*Day dawns, and the stage is empty.*

CALUM *and* IAN *come in.*

CALUM. I thought I heard one of the men of peace,
Singing alone within the narrow glen.

IAN. There is none in it.

CALUM. Yet I thought I heard
A man of peace and he at sorrowing.
God's pity on the people of the hills,
For they have lost the changing love of men,
And won their fear.

IAN. My mother used to say
That when a man would walk the darkened hills,
The men of peace would take his soul from him
And use it for their pleasure. As they did,
My mother said, in the old misty times,
Before the word of God came into Alba.

CALUM. Poor fallen gods, that were the lords of men,
God's peace upon you. Make your peace with Him.
Lose your sad pride to win His ready grace,
And stand upon the golden floor of Heaven

With other song than this. And yet, who knows,
May be your pride is of more worth to you
Than all the melodies of Paradise,
And these sad songs of yours more beautiful
Than any you could sing with happier lips.
Perhaps our Lord's sweet face might make you dumb.

ALASTAIR (*outside singing*).

Summer is gone at last, and autumn leaves are falling,
And through the naked trees the wind is breathing low.
Let us arise and go, for the old gods are calling,
The beautiful cruel gods we loved so long ago.

Let us arise and go, for far beyond the city
We hear the old gods singing the years from which we came,
The merry heartless years that knew not pain or pity,
The happy lustful years that knew not fear or shame.

The bitter music calls, and we must follow after
Back through the gentler years to the old time again,
To wake their lovely mirth, to move the gods to laughter,
This is the end of man, the full reward of pain.

The golden eyes aglow, the silver laughter ringing,
Shall we not suffer pain for lovely things as these?

Let us arise and go, for the old gods are singing,
The beautiful cruel gods that mock our miseries.

IAN. What voice is this? The men of peace are out.
May God protect us!

CALUM. Ian make an end.
Though all the beaten fairies of the air
Rise against heaven, we can cast them down,
But it were better save them with a kiss.
[*Raising his voice.*
Whoe'er you be that sing to us this morn,
Whether your dwelling be below the hills
Or in the mazy fastness of the air,
Draw near in peace. For I have learned too well
The lesson of Christ's love, to hate the sad
Discrownèd gods that are His enemies.

ALASTAIR *comes in.*

ALASTAIR. Christ's love? Then even here men pray to Christ,
The pitiful intruder; even here
In Western Morven of the windy rocks,
Where once the old gods would be wandering
Along the outer fringes of the world,

The loving god is master.

Ay and you,

With love and pity shining from your eyes,

Can you not mind upon your fathers' swords,

Anger and hate and pride and cruelty ?

IAN. Blasphemer of the world, the Lord is King,

And has set all your gods below His feet.

CALUM. If Christ the loving God is naught to you,

Anger and hate more dear to you than love,

What god would you be praying to at all ?

ALASTAIR. The bitter gods, the beautiful white gods,

That will be walking on the darkened cliffs,

Lior the haunter of the roaring tides,

Whose emerald eyes the drowning sailors see

For one sweet instant, and are swallowed up.

And Balor panoplied in shining rain,

And armoured with the lightnings of the hills

That fire our hearts to war. And chief of all,

Angus the white-foot conqueror of men,

The mist that would destroy the moon with love

If she could hold him, the eternal mist

That wanders still within our quiet hearts,

Stirring the bitter love we may not sate

Save with his own white beauty. These are they
That were your father's gods in the old days.

CALUM. The gods are fallen. On the misty crags
They walk and sorrow for the olden times.
And on the surf-beat rocks the whole night through
Lior is moaning for his vanished loves,
For we have girdled all the seas with flame,
And our new night is gentle as the day.
And the apostles' swords have pierced the rain
That armoured Balor, and the angels' hands
Have rent the fiery lightnings from his grasp,
And war is dying, dying in our hearts.
And the white feet of Angus walk the hill,
But with him go no beautiful young men,
And the young maidens bide within the house.
And you may be, that walk the city ways,
Dream that the gods are mighty yet. But we
In Western Morven, by the winter fires,
Hear all night long above the talk of men
Our broken masters wailing on the hills.

ALASTAIR. The gods are living yet, and have their thrones
In the invisible desires of men.
Below the quiet current of our lives

They move and labour to destroy the chains
Your saints have cast upon our memory.
Still in our hearts the ancient fires burn high,
And Balor, tempest-armoured, calls to us.
And you with gentle prayer and song adore
Your pitiful, sad god the whole day long.
But in the echoing nights when none is by,
In the lone nights do they not burn you still?

IAN (*dreamily*). I do remember clamorous desires,
And lusts awaking in the frozen night,
White maidens dancing underneath the moon,
And the long roll and tumble of the waves.

CALUM. Ian, remember greater things than these,
The little baby god new-born on earth,
With soft lips sucking at his mother's breast.

ALASTAIR. The sword of night has severed the gentle chains
that bound you,
The lovely gods of darkness rise in your heart anew.
Beautiful gods and mighty, in dreams they stand around you,
Kneel down in dreams and worship as once you used to do.

IAN. White maidens dancing underneath the moon,
And the fierce glow of battle on the hills,
And red, wet blood upon the slayer's hands.

CALUM. Oh, Ian, wake and see the face of Christ.
The worn sad face, the pitiful sweet eyes,
And the feet torn and bloody from the stones.

ALASTAIR. Dream on, dream on my brother, forget the man of sorrow,
The way-worn feet and bloody, the eyes too dim with tears.
Dream of the lords of beauty, for you shall see to-morrow
The older day returning and the forgotten years.

IAN. The slow tides calling, calling on the beach,
And all the little waves of night afire,
And the cool emerald depths of Lior's eyes,
That none may look upon and live again.
Oh beautiful cool depths to drown my life,—
I have remembered Lior, and the moon
Is full again and there is mist abroad,
And Angus singing clear upon the hills.
Oh young men follow Angus of the Birds,
Young maidens dance with him below the moon.
You will grow old and hear his song no more.
Oh, follow Angus now while you are young.—
Angus has passed me by, but Balor's fires
Burn fiercely in my bosom as of old,
The lust of slaying, and the bitter blood,

And the cold smile upon the foeman's face.

CALUM. Oh Ian, Ian, will you not remember
The poor feet that the nails were driven through,
The piercèd hands and the spear-riven side,
And the heroic brow false-crowned with thorns ?

IAN. The night is ending. With the day will come
The memory that dreamers may forget,
But I will yet dream on a little while,
Before day claims me for its own again,
And the soft fetters close about my soul.

[*Looking round.*

Am I awake, and you that bade me dream
Bid me remember in the eye of day ?
Is there an end of the new heaven and hell,
And all save earth and the immortal isle,
They used to tell of in the olden times ?

[*Sinks down.*

I have been dreaming, as I dream alone
In the dim nights ; but after them the day
Brings back to me anew the face of Christ.
I am afraid of this new dawn that brings
No Christ, but memories of older things.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

The scene is IAN'S *cottage. A wide fireplace with peats burning, and big chests along the walls. At a table sits* MAIRI BAIN. IAN *and* ALASTAIR *come in.*

IAN. Mairi put out more peats upon the fire,
For we have strangers in the house to-night.

MAIRI. The blessings of our Lord be with you, stranger.

ALASTAIR. Blessings be with you, woman of the house,
From older gods and greater lords than he.

MAIRI. Stranger, that is no luck-word to the house.

ALASTAIR. Have you forgotten too, and do you bow,
Pale lily of Morven, to the beaten god,
Who should be following the mist of love
Over the hills beneath a summer moon ?

IAN. Mairi the days of memory are on us,
For I have heard the coronach for Christ
Wail up the corries of the windy hills,
And high and clear above them Angus sang.
But the apostles' souls fled crying, crying
Over the hills across the boundless sea.
I heard the noise of their lament grow faint,
As the waves stilled it ; and on the hills of Morven,

Among the unseen secrets of the world,
Christ that we knelt to once is lying dead.

MAIRI. Father, have you forgotten God so soon ?

IAN. I have forgotten all things save the song
Of Angus that I cannot follow now,
And the fierce music of the lords of war,
When fighting heroes meet in the glad ring
Of sword on sword and cries of wounded men.

[*Recalls himself.*

Mairi put meat and drink before the stranger.
I must be going with the sheep again.

[*He goes out.* MAIRI *bursts into tears.*

MAIRI. My sorrow on the people of the hills,
My sorrow on the heart that could forget,
My sorrow on you, stranger, who have cast
A misty spell before my father's eyes,
So that the face of Christ grows dark to him.

ALASTAIR (*kneels beside her*).

Oh beautiful in sorrow still weep on,
Shrouding your face within a veil of tears.
Weep, for your grief will roll away the years
That have drawn long forgetfulness between us.

[*She turns away.*

Hear me, forgetting for a little while
That I am he who woke the gods again.
Think I am Alastair, who would awake
The drowsy loveliness that sleeps too long.

MAIRI (*staring at him*).

You are too beautiful for me to hate,
And yet too evil for my love.

ALASTAIR. Oh wait,
For in my heart remembrance is awake
Of the old time when we went hand in hand,
Following the harp a thousand years ago.
And I will make a song of memory,
That shall call love to your dim eyes again.

SONG

Long ago beneath the moon,
In a corrie of the hills
We forgot our ancient ills
Dancing to a wizard tune.
We remembered song and spell
Chanted in a Lochlainn rune.
Flower of Morven, it was well
Long ago beneath the moon.

Now the moon is full again,
And the song of Angus cries
Underneath the Summer skies
Till the nights of Summer wane.
Follow now while still you may,
Ere his music calls in vain,
Where the harps of Angus play,
Now the moon is full again.

Flower of Morven, long ago
In the corrie where we met,
Did you think you could forget,
Did you dream you would not know
Lips that sang the lovers' tune,
And the heart that loved you so ?
Did forgetfulness come soon,
Flower of Morven long ago ?

Oh remember me once more,
Now the mist is on the hills
And the harp of Angus stills
Moaning waves along the shore,
For the songs I made for you,
For the love that was before,

For the heart that still is true
Oh remember me once more.

MAIRI. I cannot tell if it be memory
That burns me so, or if the heart of love
Looks out from eyes I never saw till now.

ALASTAIR. The memory of a thousand years is on us,
The darkened years since our young souls, new-made,
Looked out through other eyes on other lands.
For you and I spoke with a hundred tongues,
And saw a hundred lives passing us by,
Before we came to Morven of the stags.
They have fled by like the light winds that blow
Swift shadows o'er a waveless loch. But we,
Like the loch water, bide the same for ever,
Since first the gods fashioned our souls of mist,
That at the end will take them back again.

MAIRI. The gods are dead, or if they live I care not,
For over my poor heart they have no power.
Here in the changing world we stand alone,
Ourselves for ever. I am Mairi Bain,
And you are Alastair, my love. Forget
The gods that haunted you, for they were dreams,
And I hold truth for you in these two hands.

ALASTAIR (*coming nearer*).

Oh draw me close and help me to forget,
As though there were no gods in all the world.
All the delight of living, all the beauty
That lingers in the depths of mountain pools
Is in your eyes, and on your dewy lips
The joy of lying in the grass at morning,
Before the sun is risen in the sky.

MAIRI. I dreamed I saw you seven years ago.
You brought me heather-honey and blue flowers,
And wild raspberries picked in an upland glen.

ALASTAIR. I will bring you gold from the fairy houses,
That are below the hills. I will forget
All, and grow old and happy, loving you.

MAIRI (*puts her arms round his neck*).

We will not care now for the flying shadows,
For we have come into the heart of the world.

[*They kiss. Outside a faint music is heard.* ALASTAIR *starts and turns round.*

MAIRI. What is it that you hear ?

ALASTAIR. The song of Angus
Calling across the misty hills to me.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

A grassy place in the clachan. In the middle an altar with pe and some sacrifice burning. Around it the people a standing. They sing.

SONG

Cry for the gods returning,
Cry for the saints that go,
Cry for the altars burning,
And the beacon lights burnt low.
Now in the hills above us
The masters of joy and pain,
Our loves that will not love us,
The gods are come again.

Cry for the day of slaughter,
Cry for the happy dead,
The dooms of men and the water
Over the drowning head.
Cry for the lightnings gleaming,
And the thunder answering,
The things that we longed for dreaming,
And the songs we could not sing.

Cry for the wandering singer,
And for his magic tune,
And dances that weave and linger
Under a summer moon.
Cry for the fight and tourney,
The harp the mother of tears,
And the world that with backward journey
Moves down the older years.

1ST MAN. We had our fill of slaying and wild joy
When Balor gave us victory in Appin.

2ND MAN. Uisdean was fighting like a great hero
Of those that were the guard of Fionnagal.

3RD MAN. Uisdean is lying cold upon the hills
And in the houses they are wailing him,
And the wife dumb with sorrow.

1ST MAN. It was fine
To hear the way the Appin men were crying,
And though Bean-Uisdean will be sorrowing,
The gods love slaying and the clash of swords.

ALASTAIR *comes in.*

ALASTAIR. Oh praise the gods that have renewed the world,
Until our old desires are young again.

The sun is growing weary, and draws on
The fairy-haunted stillness of the night,
That is the end of all my wandering.
For you have heard the voices that were crying
Through the long years of your forgetfulness,
And known the end of prisoning.
But I
Bid you farewell, for the last chain of all
Must be destroyed, and the last honour paid.

MAIRI *and* CALUM *come in.*

The gods are calling for the sacrifice,
And on the hills the fairy harps are playing,
That I must follow at the end of all.
Here at the altar of the king of love
I give myself the first-fruits of his fires
To die to-night upon the sacred tree.

1ST MAN. We will fulfil the sacrifice hereafter,
And tread behind you in the way of death.

2ND MAN. The servant of the gods will go his way,
That ends beyond the sight of human eyes
In the immortal island of the west.

[*They go out in reverent silence, leaving on the stage* **only**

ALASTAIR, MAIRI, *and* CALUM. MAIRI *is struck at first with terror. Then she comes up to* ALASTAIR *and speaks, weeping.*

MAIRI. Oh heart of mine, you will not leave me so,
But turn again to see the face of Christ,
And love that brought us into the bright heaven.

ALASTAIR (*uplifted with the joy of worship*).
Pale lily that I would not pluck, farewell.
A greater love than yours is calling me,
And I must follow where the harper plays
Through the short bitterness into the joy
That none may know save those who see the eyes,
The golden eyes of Angus opening.
Farewell. Our love was soiled with mortal clay,
And I am seeing the white feet of the mist.

[*He goes out.* MAIRI *sits down with her head in her hands.*

MAIRI. Oh sorrow for the fleeting love of man,
That the desires of hell have stolen away.
Oh love of mine, that the dark gods have charmed
To follow down the misty path that leads
To the eternal gloom of the abyss.
It is a farewell for us two evermore.
The gods have conquered, and the heart of love

Is bruisèd with the beating of their wings.

CALUM. Mairi, the gods are masters for an hour,
But in the end our Lord will come again
With all the host of Heaven for His guard.

MAIRI. Our Lord will come too late for him. And I
Have forgot all the sorrow of the world,
But the swift agony upon the tree
And the immortal pain of him I love.

[*She is silent a while. Then she raises her head.*

There is an end of joy, for I have bowed
My spirit to the harsh commands of love.
God will forget me who have cast Him off.
The doors of heaven are shut, and the dark fires
Burn high to-night for me.

[*She turns to* CALUM.

But you will know
The sorrow of my love that I must die
For him I set above the joy of heaven.

[*She stretches out her arms to where* ALASTAIR *has gone out.*

Oh you that brought the bitter gift to me,
Rejoice. Angus will have his sacrifice.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

The scene is the same as the first. It is night, but the great tree shows blacker. Below it sits ANGUS *in a wreath of mist.*

ANGUS (*sings*).

Let the gods awake, for memory has woken,
The little men that loved us remember us again,
The chains that were wrought of the love of Christ are broken,
And little men come back to our beauty and their pain.

Let the gods awake, for the hearts of men are waking
The little hearts that warmed us when we were a-cold.
The old time is back again, the old day is breaking—
What is man's forgetting to us who wax not old?

Let the gods awake, for the old fires are burning,
And little men remember the words they used to pray.
In all the lands of Morven our lovers are returning,
The gentle chains that bound them are vanished away.

[*From the left of the stage the waves of the sea moan, and* LIOR *speaks.*

LIOR. Who will be calling, who will be calling
The master of waters to waken again?
In my ears is the noise of the waves that are falling,
And over my head is the sound of the rain.

Who will be crying, who will be crying
To Lior the watcher, the emerald-eyed ?
Is there a story that men will be dying
For me, as their fathers, my lovers, have died ?

Who will be singing, who will be singing
Of waking to me who awaken no more ?
For men have forgot me, and no winds are bringing
The lives for my drowning they brought me before.

ANGUS. Awake, awake, Lior, the time is gone for sleeping ;
The hearts of men remember the haunter of the waves ;
Let your tides awake, for soon they will be keeping
The watch they kept of old time upon your lovers' graves.

[*The murmur of the sea swells into a roar, and the darkness in the west lightens to an emerald glow. From it* LIOR *speaks.*

LIOR. Awake my waters, for men are returning
From the new god to the lord of the tide.
On the rocks of drowning no watch-fires are burning,
For men have remembered the emerald-eyed.

Awake my waters. The north wind is blowing,
And seaward the sailors are toiling in vain,

We are the lords of their coming and going,
Men have remembered the sea-god again.

[*From the great ben* BALOR *speaks through the falling rain.*

BALOR. I will sleep still, for my trumpet of thunder,
The master of fear, has been silent for long.
The rain-clouds that armed me are riven asunder,
I will sleep still for the new god is strong.

I will sleep on, for his angels have reft me
Of lightnings that burned in my servants of yore.
War is gone from me, I only have left me
Sleep that is good at the ending of war.

I will sleep on, for men are forgetting
Balor that strode on the heads of the slain.
Anger is dead, and the old day is setting;
My servants will turn to me never again.

ANGUS. Oh wake, my brother, wake. The hearts of men grown younger
Remember Balor striding above the battle-cry.
The old fires are lit, for the old lusts are stronger;
And men are born to slay again, and born again to die.

[*Lightning flashes across the sky, and the thunder rolls.*

BALOR. I will rise up in the castles of singing,
The houses of feasting my trumpet shall hear.
The winds of the hills will come back with me bringing
The rouser of battle, the master of fear.

I will rise up where the arrows are hailing,
In the hearts of the dying I will lie down.
In the houses of Morven new widows are wailing,
For men have remembered my ancient renown.

ANGUS. Now the gods are wakened, now the world is old,
Now the lightnings flash above the rain,
Now the hymns are chanted, and the stories told,
For the ancient faith has come again.

Now the world remembers, love is passed away,
Pity buried with forgotten things.
High among the mountains, low along the bay
Men are praying to the older kings.

Now the smoke of burning scents the western winds,
Now the victim bleeds upon the sod.
The gods are remembered in Morven of the hinds,
And men have forgotten God.

[*All is quiet.* CALUM *and* MAIRI *come in.*

CALUM. This is the place of Angus.

MAIRI. Are the hills
As full of terror as they are to-night,
When you are herding in the nights of spring?

CALUM. To-night the men of peace have power on earth,
For men have loosed them. Now the hollow caves
Send forth a thousand walkers of the hills,
And all along the beach the voices call,
And fairy torches move among the rocks.
Now the old gods are masters of the world,
And wait to-night the keystone of their power.

MAIRI. I see them all about me cold and still,
The cruel, lovely faces. From the sea
I hear the voices of a thousand sorrows
Crying the coronach along the beach
For them that will be drowned in years to come.
And in the houses there is wailing too,
And moaning of strong fighters on the hill,
And maidens weeping their virginity,
And old men sorrowing for lost desires.
And the gods sit for ever cold and still,
Mocking the sorrows of the heart of men
With cruel, lovely faces.

I remember
Alastair's face and I am brave again,
And all the fairies of the lower air
Powerless as autumn leaves before the wind
Against the burning purpose of my heart.

[*Wistfully.*

I wish that I might live the summer through,
Milking the cattle in the upland glens,
And singing songs before the sheiling door,
Careless and happy as I used to be.
Eilidh will miss my hand at milking-time,
But you will tell them to be soft with her.

CALUM. Eilidh will be the princess of the cows,
When they are herded in the upland glens.

MAIRI. And you will bid the children think of me.
I shall be happy if I hear them weep,
And see their tears across the flames of Hell.

CALUM. Oh Mairi, there will be no Hell for you,
But the soft grass that is the floor of Heaven,
With lilies of the south between each blade,
And angels to go with you hand in hand,
And God the Father at the end of all.

MAIRI. Calum, soft words are harder than sharp stones

To hearts that know the end of happiness ;
For I will never press the floor of Heaven,
Nor hear the angels' voices sweet and clear,
Nor ever kiss the piercèd feet of Christ.
But sometimes I shall hear them far away
Singing the melodies of Paradise,
While I lie torn and anguished evermore,
The mate of demons in the lower Hell.
Not only this poor body, oh my God,
But all my soul's eternal ecstasy
I cast away to-night of my own will.
Go now, but kiss me once before you go,
That the last kiss may cool my lips in Hell.

CALUM. I will not go and leave you on the hills,
Alone and weak within the fairy ring.

MAIRI. The men of peace can do no harm to me,
For I am dead and lost by my own will.
But go, for I am weakening again,
And dreaming of my life's lost happiness ;
It is a lonely thing for me to die.

[*He goes out. She turns away to the tree.*

MAIRI. Darkness, and all around the waiting gods.
Oh Alastair, your heart will comfort me

If you remember me a little while,
As in the darkness I remember you.

[*She hangs herself. There is quiet and then* ALASTAIR *comes in.*

ALASTAIR. This is the last of nights on earth for me,
Since all is done that I was sent to do,
Down in the clachan there is wailing now
For son and husband stricken in their pride.
And on the hills lie the unburied dead
With hate and anger cold upon their lips,
Or terror still upon the frozen face.
And on the rocks the beacons are burnt out,
And in all Morven no man tends the fire,
And Lior takes his lovers back again.
Along the hills the song of Angus calls
White maidens and the beautiful young men
To dance with him to-night below the moon.
White maidens, and will Mairi go with them,
The pale lily of Morven I have held
Within my hands, and left to grow alone,
Because I love the beauty of the mist
More than the heavy fragrance of her hair,
And the dim soul that looks from her two eyes.

Oh, the pale shadows of immortal love,
That shiver in the eyes of mortal maids,
Cannot drink up the waters of desire,
That eddy stormily, until my heart
Is borne upon them to the last of isles,
The spring of life, the love of all the world.
Oh Angus, oh white haunter of the world,
Wandering mist that hides the heart of earth,
I come at last back to the king of love,
And cast my soul into the endless sea.

[*He turns to the tree. Seeing* MAIRI'S *figure in the branches he starts.*

There is a shadow in the lower branches
Too dark to be the bright wraith of the mist.

[*He goes towards the tree and sees who it is.*

Mairi !

[*He is silent. Then he realizes.*

And did you cast away your life,
Lily of Morven, cast your soul away
For me, oh love ?

[*A light shines over her heart, and gradually spreads over the whole body.*

ALASTAIR. My brain is all afire,

And in the flames great temples crashing down,
The houses of the gods are rent asunder,
And through them sweep the angels triumphing,
And over all I see

[*The light reaches the face.*

The face of Christ !

[*He clasps her hanging feet.*

Oh heart of earthly lovers keep me safe,
Oh blessed anguished feet, let me hold you still.

[*The light spreads over the stage and drives back the mist.*

ANGUS. The gods are forgotten in Morven of the glens ;
The sun shines clearly, and gentle is the day ;
Like snow in summer corries, like the mist upon the bens,
The lovely gods of darkness are vanished away.

END OF THE PLAY

III

PARODIES AND SONGS

Written for the 5th Seaforth Highlanders and for No. 2 Officer Cadet Battalion, Cambridge

THE BALEFUL BARD

Or The Muse Munition-Making

TIME was when squatting in a noisome ditch,
I used to while away monotonous days
By writing many doggerel lyrics, which
Were set to various untuneful lays,
And the rude soldiery who heard them sung
In billets, when we rested from the fight,
Picked up the words from me, and then gave tongue
Waking with discord all the quiet night,
And sang them, thinking it tremendous fun,
Unto the musical and writhing Hun.

And I've been told, and can believe it true,
That once, as they intoned these songs of mine,
The Germans heard and trembled, for they knew
What men were these who came into the line,
And sent a message to our Colonel,

Saying the thing was worse than what the Tanks were ;
He answered, begging them to go to Hell.
And thus we took that village on the Ancre
(This line is bad, but I have not the time
Or dictionary to find a proper rhyme.)

And now sequestered in this quiet nook,
I struggle to instruct the wise Cadet
In bombing (not according to the book)
Patrols and how most surely to revet
The crumbling trenches on the local hill,
And oft to the jocund piano's strain,
I mount upon the platform with a will
To sing those ancient songs of mine again,
And place, obedient to my country's call,
A deadlier strafer in their hands than all.

For these young officers shall find the pote
A weapon to avenge the nation's wrongs,
And they with many a discordant note
Shall chant in many a trench my poignant songs ;
And the pale enemy (to whom I fear
For the rhyme's sake I must refer as " Hunes ")

Shall tremble in their deep dug-outs to hear
Across the night those wild untuneful tunes,
And shall beseech their officers and cry,
" Let us retire at once, or else we die."

But lo, there comes a yet more dreadful day,
When with his pleasant months of Blighty o'er,
The bard shall lift his pack and hie away
To land again upon the Gallic shore,
And set his ribald muse to work anew,
And fresh atrocities shall vex the Huns,
And men shall sing them as they used to do
The while from Bosche to Bosche the whisper runs
Down the whole line from Belgium to Champagne,
" The man who wrote those songs is out again."

THE SMOKE HELMET

Tune—" The Lum Hat wantin' a Croon "

OH, the Army Corps sent out a note
For Battalion Commanders to warn
Their men, that on any and every pretext,
Or for any excuse in this world or the next,
The Smoke Helmet must never be torn.

And the days rolled placidly by,
Until at inspection one morn
The Colonel discovered that Private Mackay
Had broken the Window that covered his eye
And the front of his Helmet was torn.

So at once to the Captain he went,
And said with incredible scorn,
" The whole of your men are improperly dressed,
And one has a beard reaching down to his breast,
And another's Smoke Helmet is torn."

The O.C. for his Subaltern sent,
Who was standing, and looking forlorn,
And he told him at once to make out a Report,
Stating reasons of any and every sort,
Why Mackay's Smoke Helmet was torn.

So the Subaltern sat up all night,
Till he wished he had never been born,
And sent in a Report to the angry C.O.,
Stating seventy probable reasons or so,
Why Mackay's Smoke Helmet was torn.

From Brigade to Division it went,
And made General Headquarters to mourn,
And the Master of Ordnance made an Indent,
And a hundred and twenty Smoke Helmets were sent
For the one that Mackay had torn.

And at last it went into Whitehall,
And became an Army Form,
And Form Seven thousand and Ninety-six O
Embodies the seventy reasons or so
Why Mackay's Smoke Helmet was torn.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

BROUGHT UP TO DATE

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward—
"That is, unless some damned
Airman has blundered,
If the map isn't right
We'll be a funny sight."
So as they tramped along
Officers pondered,
While, with equipment hung,
Curses on every tongue,
Forward with rifles slung,
Slouched the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,

Cannon in front of them,
Volleyed and thundered,
" And—what was twice as bad—
Our gunners never had
Strafed that machine-gun lad.
I always wondered
If our old barrage could
Be half as bloody good
As the Staff said it would."
Was there a man dismayed ?
Yes, they were damned afraid,
Loathing both shot and shell,
Into the mouth of Hell,
Sticking it pretty well,
Slouched the six hundred.

Through the barrage they passed,
Men falling thick and fast,
Till the machine-gun blast
Smote them to lying
Down in the grass a bit;
Over the roar of it

Officers yelled, were hit,
Dropped and lay dying.
Then the retreat began,
Every unwounded man
Staggered or crawled or ran
Back to the trench again,
While on the broken plain
Dead and untroubling,
Wounded and wondering,
What help the night would bring,
Lay the six hundred.

TO BASIL, A BAVARIAN BOMBER

IN MEMORY OF THE BARRICADES IN THE LABYRINTH

IN that remembered and unpleasant spot,
Where 'twas my task to haunt the barricade,
To hurl the bomb and give it to you hot
For every little tiny sound you made.
Oh, Basil, when at first your bombs returned,
Our martial spirits quickened and we burned
To land you one—the very batmen yearned
For that decease of yours too long delayed.

And it was very galling, when we threw
Grenades that might have chilled the stoutest's blood,
Only to hear that plaintive call from you,
Informing us it was another dud.
And when the gent from the Brigade was nigh,
Watching our Millses' fizzing through the sky,
To see you hit him neatly in the eye
With little well-aimed lumps of harmless mud.

Often men came to me and said that they
Had done you in at last and heard you yell,
But 'twas my sorrow on th' ensuing day
To hear again the voice I knew so well.
And when one night with dark and fell design
We carried out that raid upon your line,
It was with hopes, old enemy of mine,
That we should send you rapidly to hell.

But now that I am far from war's alarms
I like to muse upon the years to come
When we shall both have done with force and arms,
And Mills and Spaeter [1] will alike be dumb,
And those familiar accents I shall hear,
And we shall meet, oh peerless grenadier—
What shall it be, my Basil? Whisky? Beer?
Or punch concocted out of ration rum?

I think it shall be punch; I also think
That, as we ladle down the potent brew,
Myself and you, my Basil, ought to drink
Health to the barricades at which we threw

[1] Karl Spaeter, a prominent Bosche munitioneer.

The bomb, a much less dangerous affair,
And I at last shall down you ; for whate'er
Impotent things my poor old Millses were,
My punch is not a dud, I promise you.

WHERE THE TRENCHES RUN DOWN FROM THE SOMME TO THE SEA

Tune—"The Mountains of Morne"

OH, Mary, the front is a wonderful place,
Where a person can't fight without shaving his face
We're not very frightened of shells, so I've found,
But when generals come near we all get to ground.
I met one in a trench, and some tea-leaves were there,
And we got such a strafing it whitened our hair,
So it seems we must swallow the leaves in our tea,
Where the trenches run down from the Somme to the sea.

At night-time I can't sleep a full minute's space,
For the rats playing games on the top of my face,
And other small creatures I'd rather not name,
But they live in the folds of my kilt just the same.
Tell wee Jimmy, if only our dug-out he knew,
He'd never be asking to go to the Zoo,

For every dug-out is a menagerie,
Where the trenches run down from the Somme to the sea.

The sap that I stand in, it nightly is made
Into hell by a thing they call Rifle Grenade,
And when heavy trench mortars are bursting close by
It is *not* lust of battle that gleams in my eye.
Don't think me a coward though, Mary, my dear,
For along the whole front it's the same thing I fear,
And every young hero is funking like me,
Where the trenches run down from the Somme to the sea.

At Albert they've lately begun an advance
Which is going to shove all the Bosches out of France,
And we are all waiting and hoping some day
To meet with the gentlemen over the way.
And oh, what a state of delight we'll be in
When we're bombing our way up the streets of Berlin,
So I hope in a few months I surely shall be
In a train running down from Berlin to the sea.

THE WHOLE DUTY OF A COMPAN OFFICER

(i) The Offensive Spirit

Tune—" It's the only, only way "

IF at night you see a Hun,
Be it many or just one,
Crawling out about the ground,
Don't you make a single sound.
Watch him till you see him roll
Into a convenient hole,
Take your Mills, pull out the pin,
Then just lob it in.

It's the only, only way,
It's the only game to play,
He's the only Bosche, and it's only fair,
For you haven't got any bombs to spare,
So you strafe him on the spot
With the only Mills you've got,

If you're only wise, you will only say
" That's the umpteenth Bosche that I've killed to-day ";
So take my advice, and you'll count him twice—
It's the o—o—only way.

(ii) Co-operation

If the Bosches should attack,
And your runners can't get back,
And his bloody barrage-fire's
Broken all your buzzer wires,
Don't get flurried, my young friend,
Or attempt your wires to mend,
If you want to stop the foe,
Let your rockets go.

It's the only, only way,
It's the telephonely way,
Here's a barrage on, and you can't get through,
And you don't know what in the hell to do,
So put up your S.O.S.,
And the guns will answer, " Yes,"
You will find it really the game to play
If the Bosche attacks you by night or day,

Just get on the guns, and you'll smash the Huns,
It's the o—o—only way.

(iii) The Acquisition of Decorations

If you want a D.S.O.,
Or a small M.C. or so,
Don't go crawling rashly out
When there's nobody about,
In the middle of a fight
Ask a private for a light—
The correspondent's interview
Will do the rest for you.

It's the only, only way,
It's the only game to play,
For there's nothing people at home like more
Than tobacco smoke in the midst of war,
So get out your cigarette
Or a pipe is better yet,
If a general comes, he will only say,
That's the coolest man that I've seen to-day,
Take his name for me for our next V.C.,"
It's the o—o—only way.

HIGH WOOD TO WATERLOT FARM

Tune—"Chalk Farm to Camberwell Green"

THERE is a wood at the top of a hill,
If it's not shifted it's standing there still;
There is a farm a short distance away,
But I'd not advise you to go there by day,
For the snipers abound, and the shells are not rare,
And a man's only chance is to run like a hare,
So take my advice if you're chancing your arm
From High Wood to Waterlot Farm.

Chorus—High Wood to Waterlot Farm,
All on a summer's day,
Up you get to the top of the trench
Though you're sniped at all the way.
If you've got a smoke helmet there
You'd best put it on if you could,
For the wood down by Waterlot Farm
Is a bloody high wood.

THE GERMAN IN HIS BLINDNESS

Tune—" Greenland's icy mountains "

THE German in his blindness,
He seeks his dug-out door
As soon as our trench-mortars
And guns begin to roar.
He doesn't wear equipment,
His sentries aren't about,
And then up come the Seaforths
And knock the Bosches out.

What though their roomy dug-outs
Go down for half a mile,
Where every prospect pleases
And only Bosche is vile;
Yet no one of their inmates
Has been known to survive,

An intimate acquaintance
With our old Number 5.[1]

So all you little Bosches,
That listen to my lay,
Stick closely to your rifles,
And clean them every day,
And every night and morning
Just fill yourselves with rum,
For you'll need all your ration
The day the Seaforths come.

[1] No. 5 Mills hand grenade, a handy little bomb.

ODE TO A FRENCH REGIMENT

ON FINDING THEY HAD LEFT BEHIND MORE STORES THAN WE HAD BARGAINED FOR

DEAR Allies, whom we were relieving,
When we came to the line from our rest,
We came to you fondly believing
You would take us and give us your best.
You gave us your wine in full measure,
Your rum and your coffee was nice,
And as an additional pleasure
You left us your lice.

Oh, lice full of vigour and beauty,
That rove where the rich blood was spilt,
Do you really believe it your duty
To make your abode in my kilt ?
Do you honestly think my suspenders
A fit place to take your repose,

And prey on your country's defenders
Instead of her foes ?

Are you really French vermin, I wonder,
Or when the new trenches were won
Did they count in the tale of their plunder
The fleas and the lice of the Hun ?
Do no thoughts of my vengeance appal you
When at night to the battle you rise,
Are you patriots, or shall I call you
Mere traitors and spies ?

Nay, then I shall slay you, preferring
To think you the breed of the Bosche,
Who leap from your trenches preparing
To feed on the vitals of Tosh.[1]
When the iron of the tailor is singeing
The pleats of the kilt that was mine,
I like to think you will die singing
The Watch on the Rhine.

[1] Name by which I was known in the battalion.

MY OLD GRENADE

Tune—"My Old Shako"

I MIND the day, my old grenade,
When first we met at war,
'Twas in a little billet place
Six months ago and more;
I dreamt that I should be cashiered,
As I went to the Orderly Room—
'Twas then I met our Adjutant,
And he spoke my final doom.

Heigh-ho, you have got to know
All about the bombs and how to detonate and throw,
And then I hope you'll bring us back, when to the line we go,
Ten, twenty, thirty, forty Bosches in a row.

I recollect, my old grenade,
The time I tried that same,

'Twas in a most unpleasant wood,
The Hammerhead [1] by name,
When we waited for three hours or more
Under the Bosches' fire—
But I only got a beastly cold
And some scratches from the wire.

Heigh-ho, how was I to know
They'd wired the bottom of the ditch by which we had to go
And that was how I somehow failed to get the D.S.O.,
With ten, twenty, thirty, forty Bosches in a row.

I'm waiting now, my old grenade,
Until the spring sets in,
And the blinking old Division
More pushing will begin.
And when you come to bury me
With a handy pick and spade,
Just write, " Here lies a grenadier
That loathed his old grenade."

[1] Hammerhead Wood, Thiepval, where the Bosches nearly cut short a bright young life.

Heigh-ho, and I hope that I shall go
To a place where I shall never get an order or memo.,
And here's to every gallant lad that gets a D.S.O.
By bringing twenty, thirty, forty Bosches in a row.

A BOMBER'S LIFE

Tune—" A Policeman's Life is not a Happy One."

WHEN our enterprising bombers are not bombing,
And our rifles are not throwing their grenades,
We get tidings that the Gilded Staff are coming,
And we get the men to work with picks and spades.
When our bombing posts at night-time we're alarming
For surprises by the ever-ready Hun,
And it's raining and the weather isn't charming,
Oh, a bomber's life is not a happy one.

Chorus—When he's scheming out surprises for the Hun,
Oh, a bomber's life is not a happy one.

First our bombing post in trenches we are placing
Where the enterprising German might creep in,
Then back homeward for a memo. we are chasing
On a hand grenade deficient of a pin.

When our parties we are personally taking
Through a salient [1] that's like a rabbit-run,
And our knees with fear of oil-cans both are quaking,
Oh, a bomber's life is not a happy one.

When we contemplate a little mild aggression,
Other officers all gather round and say
In tones of unmistakable depression,
That they'd much prefer it if we'd go away.
When at last, by dint of infinite intriguing,
They allow a little bombing to be done,
And we find that all our men are off fatiguing,
Oh, a bomber's life is not a happy one.

Chorus as before.

[1] Thiepval South Salient, of evil memory.

COMPLAINT OF OUR PRIVATE SOLDIERS

Tune—"We are but little children weak"

WE are but little Seaforths weak,
Our pay is seven bob a week.
Whate'er we do by night or day,
It makes no difference to our pay.

Our hours a day are twenty-four,
We thank the Lord there are no more,
For if there were, we know that we
Would work another two or three.

There is one thing we do believe,
That we're entitled to some leave;
We know not why we are so cursed,
We'll get our old-age pensions first.

I am indebted for this lyric to the privates of No. 16 Platoon of my Battalion. I don't know how many survive of the composers, but I record my thanks to them here.

FOUR AND TWENTY BOMBERS

Tune—" The Ball at Kirriemuir "

OH, four and twenty bombers,
Gaed oot at La Boisselle,
An' only ane cam' back again,
Remarkin' it was hell.

Chorus—Singing " Wha'll dae't the next time ?
Wha'll dae't the noo ?
The lads that did it last time
Cannae dae it noo."

We bombed 'em for fower hours,
Until we had tae stop,
An' then there was a row o' duds
Upon the crater top.

Chorus—Singing, etc.

Sae here's tae the Kaiser,
We'll soon hae's blood,
If we cannae throw a live
We can aye buzz a dud.

Chorus—Singing, etc.

This choice lyric, from which the best verse is omitted, for obvious reasons, is set to an ancient and disreputable Scotch ballad.

SNIPER SANDY

(Sergeant Alexander Macdonald, Killed in Action at Beaumont-Hamel, *November 18th*, 1916)

Tune—" Sister Susie sewing shirts for soldiers "

SANDY MAC the sniper is a-sniping from his loop-hole,
With a telescopic rifle he is looking for a Hun.
If he sees a sniper lurking, or a working-party working,
At once he opens fire on them, and bags them every one.
And when you come into our trench, by night-time or by day,
We take you to his loop-hole, and we point to him and say—

Chorus—

" Sniper Sandy's slaying Saxon soldiers,
And Saxon soldiers seldom show but Sandy slays a few
And every day the Bosches put up little wooden crosses
In the cemetery for Saxon soldiers Sniper Sandy slew.

Now in the German trenches there's a sniper they call Herman
A stout and stolid Saxon with a healthy growth of beard,

And Hermann with his rifle is the pride of every German,
Until our Sandy gets on him, and Hermann gets afeared,
For when he hears the bullets come he slides down to the ground,
And tremblingly he gasps out to his comrades all around—

Chorus—

" Sniper Sandy's slaying Saxon soldiers,
And Saxon soldiers seldom show but Sandy slays a few,
And every day the Bosches put up little wooden crosses
In the cemetery for Saxon soldiers Sniper Sandy slew."

The Seaforths got so proud of Sandy's prowess with his rifle,
They drew up a report on him and sent it to the Corps,
And ninety-seven was his bag—it doesn't seem a trifle—
But Sandy isn't certain that it wasn't rather more,
And when Sir John French heard of it, he broke into a laugh,
And rubbed his hands and chuckled to the Chief of General Staff—

Chorus—" Sniper Sandy," etc.

A SONG IN PRAISE OF THE ARMY SERVICE CORPS

Tune—" The Minstrel Boy to the War has gone "

THE A.S.C. to the war have gone,
At the base at Havre you will find them,
Their shining spurs they have girded on,
But they left their bayonets behind them.
" What's the sense," cried the A.S.C.,
" Of taking to France the damn things ?
Their only use, it seems to me,
Is to open the infantry's jam-tins."

The A.S.C. were driving by
When a German shell came over.
At once, determined to do or die,
They one and all took cover.
Their letters home made much of that shell,
And the guns that the Huns turned on them,

They did not mention that the pip-squeak fell
At least a mile beyon' them.

Then thank the Lord for the A.S.C.,
The pride and joy of the nation,
Who bring our bacon and jam and tea,
And our Maconochie ration.
Here's good luck to the A.S.C.,
Though if they'd never come, boys,
I bet we'd all get strawberry,
Instead of apple and plum, boys.

IV

THREE STUDIES IN WAR PSYCHOLOGY

A RAID

"PARTY, 'shun! Left-turn! You will parade again at 2.15 in full equipment. Party, dis-miss!"

The fifty big men turned to their right, slapped their rifles, and broke off by twos and threes towards their billet. As they went in, one splendid-looking boy of nineteen or twenty seized a friend by the waist and brought him down after a short struggle.

"You look out, De Wet," said his Sergeant, an English Highlander, "or you'll be too tired to get at the Germans."

The boy looked up, flashing a smile at him.

"Tired? I'll no get tired," he said, "this is chust ma trainin'," and followed the rest into the billet.

Their two officers stood watching them as they went.

"My God, Charles," said the Senior Subaltern, "aren't they great? God help any Bosche that meets those lads. They're just as fit and happy as they can be. I feel top-hole, too, don't you? I don't see that there's anything can spoil it."

The other spoke slowly, looking in front of him.

"Oh, I'm not in the least afraid of anything, if we can only get into the trench," he said. "If the wire's cut "

"Oh, damn the wire," said the Senior Subaltern hotly "it can't help being cut. Anyhow, there's very little there to start with, and if there's any bombardment at all, it'll go west; and there's going to be a hell of a bombardment. Anyhow, *we* can't do any more. Come on in and feed."

For the last week the two had been down in the village with their fifty men, training hard for a raid on the German salient opposite their line. A fortnight's hard reconnoitring night after night had let them know all that could be known about the ground, and the week had been mostly spent in bayonet fighting and bombing, and generally in making them, as the Senior Subaltern put it, "fit to waltz through hell and back again." But all the time their two officers had before them one dread—the spectre of the uncut wire. They were both experienced soldiers and knew what it meant—and now, as they went into luncheon, each saw a vision of his splendid men struggling in the meshes, and heard the rattle of a ghostly machine-gun. At luncheon they managed to forget their fear for a little, and the Senior Subaltern, a light-hearted person entertained the Quartermaster, Transport Officer, and Padre

with whom they messed, by a vivid and heartrending description of the painful scene which would take place as his mangled corpse was borne down the line, and their unavailing regrets that they had not been kinder to him when he was a bright, happy boy. Charles MacRae, his junior, was more serious, but both of them felt curiously as if the whole raid was just a game of unreality, and at the last moment they would hear that it was "let us pretend." Particularly did they feel this when, after luncheon, they paid their servants the arrears. The Senior Subaltern's batman refused to take the money; to which his officer replied: "You've jolly well got to. I'm not going to have you rifling my pockets for it after I'm dead." From which it may be seen that he was a particularly cheerful pessimist.

At 2.15 the pontoon waggons, which the sappers had lent the party, arrived, and the men piled on to them laden, some with rifle and bayonet, some with spiked knobkerries, and all with bombs. Their officers climbed on to the leading waggon, and the cavalcade started, looking, as MacRae said, like a football crowd. All the troops they met looked at them with respect, guessing their mission, and everybody felt no end of a fine fellow, quite forgetting the imminent danger which caused the respect. The only thing they seemed to be

nervous of was falling off the waggons. As they drove past a redoubt some way behind the reserve line, Charles MacRae spoke, " That's fine wire," he said. " You wouldn't get through that easily." " Oh," said his Senior, " that's back wire. You won't get anything like that in a front line." But the nightmare had gripped them again, and both were silent until they dismounted from their waggons and started to file up the communication trench, when the babble of talk died down among the men too, and the only sound was the heavy breathing of an apoplectic Sergeant.

" I'm sorry hurrying you, Sergeant Dunnet," said the Senior Subaltern, " but we've got to be at Battalion Headquarters at 5, although I don't suppose zero'll be for a good time after that."

Zero, it must be explained, is the time of the raid. In the orders it had been stated, " The artillery will barrage at X. 20. The infantry will advance at X. 25." What time X. was, would not be given out until they reached Battalion H.Q. Hence the uncertainty of the Senior Subaltern and his hurry.

The battalion was lying in the reserve trench near Brigade H.Q. As they moved along the trench comrades came out of their dug-outs into the sunlight to wish them good luck, and from the Coy. Mess to which the two officers belonged

came shouts of "Tagg!" (the Senior Subaltern's name was MacTaggart).

"Hullo, John," replied that perspiring individual. "Hullo, A Coy."

"When are you going over, Tagg?" inquired his Captain.

"I don't know. Probably not for a good while, but we've got to be at H.Q. at 5."

"Well, come and have tea with us. We've got fresh salmon. Just come out. The Major's coming, and David."

"Right Ho! I will, but I must buzz along now or the C.O.'ll be wanting to know why the devil I'm late."

At Battalion H.Q. he stopped and saluted his C.O., who was leaning against the parados with the Major and the Adjutant.

"Here he is," said the Colonel. "How are you feeling, MacTaggart?"

"Very hot, sir," said MacTaggart with fervour, wiping his brow, "I could do with some tea fine."

"Come and have it with us," said the C.O. "You've plenty of time. X. isn't till 8."

"Oh, good," said MacTaggart. "Do you hear that, Charles? Three hours we've got. When shall I tell the men to fall in again, sir?"

"Seven will do," said the C.O. "But what have you done to yourself? I've never seen you look so smart. Is that a new tunic?"

"Well, sir," said MacTaggart with a grin, "I thought I might as well get killed like a gentleman."

"You are a gruesome young devil," said the Adjutant. "Are you coming to tea at Headquarters?"

"Well, as a matter of fact we've got a previous invitation coupled with a salmon from A Coy," replied the graceless youth, "and unless you've anything better. "

"Oh, get along," said the C.O. "Have you got a watch yet?"

"No, sir, I'm borrowing David Sutherland's." And the raiding party dispersed each to a dug-out to feed at other people's expense.

During tea the fear which had possessed the two officers left them, and a pleasant tranquillity based on the reflexion that it couldn't be helped took its place; but the sensation of unreality was very strong as they sat in the dug-out with their friends just as they had done a hundred times; only now they were going over the top in two hours' time. At last at seven they girded on their weapons, and stumbled up the dug-out steps.

"Good-bye, old things," said MacTaggart at the top, "no doubt I shall see you again some time to-night."

"Good-bye, Tagg," floated up a voice from below. "Will you have lilies or roses?"

"No flowers by request," was the retort, and the O.C. raid proceeded to Headquarters where his party was already assembled, and their grey-haired Brigadier, himself a Highlander and veteran of three wars, was waiting to speak to them before they went out. His speech was a short and simple one characteristic of the man. "You're going to help make the name of the regiment, and the fame of the North, to-night, men. I've heard that in Flanders yesterday the Bosche came up against Scotsmen again, and got the worst of it. Now, you'll show 'em to-day that Scotsmen can give them the worst of it here, too. Scotland for ever. Lead on, Mr MacTaggart, and good luck," and the raiding party filed up the long communication trench to the front line.

The spring evening was quiet and still, with hardly a cloud to ruffle the sky, and birds here and there were singing as the party tramped on. Overhead came the drone of a British aeroplane, but nowhere was there a sound of shelling. It was the quietest evening any of them had seen on that battered front; only they knew that soon its tranquillity would be torn

with the rushing of a thousand shells through the air, and all the imminent hell into which they must charge to meet what secret foes awaited them hidden in the deep and silent trench.

"Good luck, sir." "Good luck, boys!" N.C.O.'s and men of their battalion stood at attention as they passed up, and a lump came into the Senior Subaltern's throat. Suppose he had lost his nerve. Suppose that when the time came he should not have the courage to give the signal to advance. Savagely he fought his doubts, reminding himself of past risks lightly taken, heartening himself with a phrase he had heard the men use, "they cannae kill our officer," and partially succeeded. But the abysmal doubt persisted somewhere in his brain, as it had done always before action, and probably always would.

At the support trench he parted from Charles MacRae, who was to advance from another crater. "See you in half an hour, Charlie," he said, and went on to the front line with his half of the party. A sister battalion of the regiment was garrisoning the front line, and as he went up he passed officers he knew. He hurried his party a bit, feeling unreasonably that they would be too late into the crater, and as they went up the narrow trench leading to it there was a metallic roar

from the German trench 80 yards away. The men ducked instinctively.

"Trench mortar," said one. "Terrible short, though. There goes another," and craned his neck up to watch the burst.

His officer turned on him savagely, "Keep down, you damned fool," he said. "Do you want to give us away?"

Three fears began to obsess him. Perhaps the Germans would retaliate and drop one on to his close-packed party; perhaps the bloody fools had showed themselves already and given the raid away.

"Oh, God," he whispered, "don't let us get casualties before we start the show."

The other fear was caught from the men. All along the line the whisper was running, "Short, they're droppin' short an' missin' the trench."

"You fools," he whispered back, "that's going for the wire, not the trench," and reassured them; but all the same, he felt it himself. The bursts seemed short, even for the wire.

Now they had come to the first crater from which a tunnel had been made to the second. "Fix bayonets," he whispered, "and keep low."

One by one they slipped into the crater while their officer

cursed them softly for not keeping low, or making a row. Then through the tunnel, and lying down below the lip he looked at his watch. Ten minutes too soon.

"We've plenty of time, boys," he whispered, "I'll give you the word to get ready."

The men composed themselves to wait in easy attitudes, but each had some nervous trick betraying his tense condition. Some licked their dry lips again and again, some felt their bayonets. One red-haired fellow took out all his bombs, one by one, and squeezed their pins pensively. The enemy trench mortars were replying on our trench now, and the usual evening bombardment was going on. A new fear took possession of the Senior Subaltern. He looked at his watch. There would be a hitch in the timing; the barrage would be late, and they would have to go over without it. He watched the seconds go by. Only one minute, only half a minute, to the start of the barrage.

Swish—bang—bang—bang. The whole earth was convulsed with a tornado of sound, as the roar of the bursting shells in the German line convinced the Senior Subaltern that all was well. The men in the crater pressed their faces to the ground that was shaking beneath them, trying to hide themselves from that terrible crashing, but their officer's heart

sang within him. It was all right. It was properly timed. He glanced at his watch, and nudged the men on each side of him.

"Pass along, 'Three minutes to go, get ready,'" he yelled —no need to whisper now—and into his mind came a picture of his boat on the Isis on a sunny day, and the coach on the bank counting the seconds to the starting gun. He laughed at the queer similarity.

"Half a minute more," he passed along, and watched the seconds ticking past. Then all at once he climbed up, and, for a second or two, stood alone on the crater lip. "Come along, boys," he said quietly, and the raiding party poured after him out across the open.

As he ran across the shell-torn No Man's Land a strange exultation came over him. It was the same ground that he had crawled through painfully night after night, but seen in the daylight it was different and very thrilling. But what a devil of a long way it was—much farther than he had thought. Where was the damned trench? Surely it wasn't so far as all that.

Suddenly it yawned before him, and he saw at his feet a few scattered posts, and some strands of broken wire. A huge relief took possession of him, as he threw away his wire-cutters,

shouting, "Come along, boys! The bloody wire's cut," and plunged forward to the trench.

Wide and deep and empty it lay at his feet, and he forgot all about bayonets and bombs and Germans, thinking only how he could get down without falling flat on his face. He climbed down gingerly from sandbag to sandbag, and turned to the left with his revolver ready, full of disappointment and fear that the Bosche had evacuated.

Round the traverse was one of his men looking at a hole under the parapet. He stood and stared too, wondering stupidly what the devil it could be. "It's a dug-out," said the man's voice from very far away, and suddenly he was aware of a bullet hitting the side of the trench, and four Bosches stumbling up the dug-out steps, and shouting as they came. All at once his brain began to act rapidly. He yelled inarticulate curses, and pulled out a bomb from his haversack. The pin came out easily, but the Germans were too close. He dropped the lever and held the thing for a second or two; then flung it at the climbing men and leapt side-ways. There was a sharp crash as the bomb burst, and he sprang back again with his revolver ready. Writhing on the dug-out steps lay three of the Germans. The fourth leaned against the side with his hands over his face. A savage joy possessed the

Senior Subaltern, and he shoved his revolver close to the man's face and fired. Those clutching hands dropped, and the German crashed to the steps with the back of his head blown away.

"Bomb down there," yelled MacTaggart to the men who had gathered outside, and tore on to the left to meet MacRae's party at the point of the salient. Still there was not a German in the trench, and the M.G. emplacement at the point stood empty with the mouth of a dug-out below it. Up the trench towards him came a stream of running men, and he had nearly fired when he saw that they were kilted, and Charles MacRae was at the head. He turned to bomb the big dug-out. From below came a shout, "You bastards! You English bastards."

"English be ——!" yelled a man behind him hoarsely, "Scotch, you —— liars," and a bomb shot down the stair.

Even in the midst of the shouting and the explosions, he had time to laugh at that.

As he stood watching them bombing he suddenly became aware of one of his own men from the right coming towards him at a sort of staggering run. Blood was streaming down the man's face and neck, and then MacTaggart saw one of the most terrible sights in the world, fear in the eyes of a brave man.

" I'm wounded, sir," the man gasped as he ran.

The words steadied MacTaggart.

" All right," he said clearly. " That's the way home."

The man climbed painfully out and vanished.

Down the trench slowly came the red-haired man who had fingered his bombs in the crater. He was weaponless now, and his hands clutched at the sides of the trench as he came on, bleeding and wild-eyed.

" I'm wounded, sir, I'm wounded," he groaned.

" All right, out you go," said his officer. " What was it ? "

" Our own —— shells," cried the man, his voice rising to a scream, and he, too, disappeared.

Now a great knot of wounded and panic-struck men came down, and MacTaggart thought " We're done. They've properly caught us. No matter. We killed a good few in those two dug-outs anyway." And gave the signal to retire.

From both sides the men streamed past and out, their officers watching them as they went. One wounded man came limping up, and stood feebly hesitating.

" Oh, get to hell out of this," yelled the Senior Subaltern, and half-kicked, half-pushed him on to the parapet. Two sappers brought up land mines and laid them one in the dug-out, and

one in the emplacement. Then they scrambled out, and the two officers prepared to follow.

"Sir! Sir!"

MacTaggart turned. It was his English Sergeant, Godstone, no longer immaculate, but dishevelled and wild-eyed. The Sergeant saluted.

"I've three men along here with their legs off," he said.

In a flash MacTaggart saw the two possibilities before him. The men were certain to die, and it was pretty certain death for himself and the other two to go back. "Just chucking away extra lives," he thought, and suddenly found life very desirable. For a second he hesitated. Then he remembered a score of things—his promise that he wouldn't go back and leave one of them alive in the German trench, his pride that the men had always trusted him and followed him, his affection for the men, and, above all, the eternal principle, as old as war, "An officer can't desert his men." He turned to Charlie MacRae, suddenly calm, "Will you watch the left," he said; "Sergeant Godstone and I will bring these fellows along."

The impassive MacRae climbed on to the parapet, and sat there with his revolver in his right hand and a bomb in his left. He, too, like MacTaggart, knew that the odds were a

thousand to one against them, but he made no remark. As MacTaggart turned back at the corner of the traverse he felt strangely comforted by the sight of MacRae sitting solidly there with his eyes fixed on the trench.

Along the trench the two ran past dug-outs from which came sounds of moanings, and suddenly came on the three men lying in a blood-stained bay with their rifles and bombs littering the ground. The first looked up at them as they bent over him. It was the boy who had wrestled with his chum in the morning. His legs were off below the thigh, and he looked strangely shrunken. "I'm done for, Sergeant," he said steadily, "you take the others."

The next man lay screaming, "Oh, my legs, my legs." They lifted him and dragged him along the trench, cursing. The Senior Subaltern was filled with unreasonable anger against the man for being so heavy and making such a filthy row.

"Oh, *come* on, you silly devil," he said, with a pull which made the man scream; then "Oh, I *am* sorry, Thompson. No matter. You'll be home soon."

As they dragged him to the point of exit they saw MacRae still sitting impassive, looking down the trench to the left. The Sergeant climbed up, and between them they lifted the groaning man up the twelve-foot parapet.

Sergeant Godstone dragged him to a shell-hole, and MacTaggart went back for the others. He was alone now, and the queer comfort which the Sergeant's presence had given him was withdrawn. He looked fearfully at each dug-out door, expecting to see a German bayonet emerging. By the time he had got to the men again he felt weak and hopeless. He fingered his pistol, thinking, "One shot for me and one for each of the men. They won't get any prisoners."

At his feet a wounded man looked up piteously.

"Ma airm an' ma leg's off," he cried, full of his own pain, "Ma airm an' ma leg's off." MacTaggart felt that the chap would have appealed just the same to a Prussian for sympathy. A great pity flooded his mind, mixed again with wild anger at the man for giving him all this trouble.

"Oh, you silly devil," he shouted in a high unnatural voice, "can't you crawl on your other leg and arm?"

The man groaned. "Turn me over, sir, and I'll try."

There was a noise of feet and guttural voices along the trench beyond. MacTaggart tore a bomb from his bag and threw it over the traverse. Screams followed the burst and feet running rapidly away.

A man slipped down from the parapet above him. "I heard ye were left behind, sir," he said, conversationally, and

MacTaggart turned to see his own bombing Sergeant, come back for him through the No Man's Land again. Suddenly he felt "This is all right. I'm going to get through. We're all going to get through. And isn't wee Macdonald a damned fine chap to come back for me like that?"

"Come on, Macdonald," he cried, and together they dragged the man to the point, and rolled him up on to the parapet.

Once again they went back for the boy. His brown eyes were dull now, but he whispered, "You clear out, sir, I'm done."

"Rot," said his officer, and up to the point they dragged him and tried to lift the dead weight to the top.

All at once MacTaggart's strength seemed to leave him, and his arms were powerless to move the heavy body.

"Oh, God! I can't shift him," he gasped. "Charlie, come and help."

Charlie MacRae set his arms to the work, and his senior staggered into the open to drag MacNeil, the man with the pulped leg and arm, into an old trench, which ran down to their own line. The German guns were bursting shrapnel all along their parapet now, but he did not notice except in a curious, unthinking way, as if his mind was dulled to danger. He was filled with a hysterical rage against the Germans for

hurting his men, and, as he lugged the groaning MacNeil into the slight cover of the old trench, with an artistic delight in the thing he was doing, he seemed to be regarding himself from the front stalls of a gigantic theatre and applauding a fine piece of acting. He wouldn't get through it, and nobody would know, but he was doing the right thing, and painting a good picture. The æsthetic joy of it buoyed him up as he helped Sergeant Godstone along with the other man; then went back to the parapet where Charles and Sergeant Macdonald were still struggling with the boy. He looked down at the shrunken face.

"I believe we'll have to leave him, Charles," he said, "he's a dying man."

Charlie MacRae looked up with his hand on the boy's heart.

"No, he isn't," he said; "he's dead."

They rose and left him lying there on the German parapet; from the right as they ran for the old trench, came the clatter of a machine-gun.

The next few minutes seemed to MacTaggart interminable hours filled with the bursting of shells and the shrieks of the wounded men, as he pulled them along. Now he was lugging at one, now at the other, and now running back with Macdonald, screaming hysterical curses, to throw bombs into the Bosche

trench. There was one moment of terror when their two land mines went up, and another, when Macdonald shouted "They're coming, sir," and he ran back, firing his revolver at grey figures that he fancied were looming through the smoke. One of the wounded men, a Catholic, began to confess his sins as they dragged him along. Once Sergeant Godstone prayed for strength to get them in, and MacTaggart heard himself crying, "Oh, God, let's get these poor devils in, and give those swine hell, and I don't care what happens." Then there was a terrible time when only Godstone and he seemed to be left; he ran down to our line to look for stretcher-bearers, and found two men sitting in a hole.

"Come on, you bloody cowards," he yelled, "and help us in with the wounded.

"We're wounded ourselves, Tagg," said Charles MacRae.

"Oh, it's all right, Charlie," he shouted back, "we'll get them in all right." But back MacRae and Macdonald came to help them in.

And now at the mouth of our sap were stretcher-bearers to give them a hand, and wire half-cut, easy to get through for whole men, but making the wounded scream with pain; while in the broken hole crouched MacTaggart telling the rest to get in and he would cover their retreat, till suddenly

British shrapnel cloaked the German line, and for five minutes our own machine-guns screamed over his head. Then, all at once, the tumult stopped dead, and in the stillness there came from the German salient a single flare. The raid was over.

With the end of danger MacTaggart broke down and sobbed, crying for "My men, my beautiful men," and then turning to the German line with a scream, "You swine. I'll give you hell for this." A hand fell on his arm. It was his dear Major, "Father" to the whole brigade.

"What's up, Tagg?" said the Major.

"I'm going back to give those swine hell, Major," he yelled, and was knocked sideways by a vigorous clout on the head.

"You young fool," said the Major, "what you want is a drink," and led him down to H.Q., where his men were already assembled. First of all, he went to the dressing station, and found there men lying and sitting, to hear from one that he had bayoneted two Germans, from another that he had bombed such dug-outs, and to realize that the raid had really succeeded, although it was a while before they found how well.

At H.Q. was Sergeant Godstone sitting on the steps with his head in his hands—it was from his section that the dead had come. The C.O. gave them both strong whiskies, and brought in Charles MacRae for another. Then they went to Brigade

H.Q., to receive the thanks of the Brigadier, and lastly, jolted off, he and Godstone together, in a mess-cart back to the village again.

At the end of the village a waiting piper struck up " Highland Laddie."

" Damn you, shut up," shouted MacTaggart to him. " That's not the way I feel."

Stiffly he dismounted from the cart, and saying good-night to his men, walked slowly up the hill to the billet, where he and Charles had stayed together.

Their landlady came to the door crying, " Mais où est l'autre officier ? "

" Il est blessé, Madame," said MacTaggart heavily, " mais nous avons tué plus que quarante Bosches—et je suis tres fatigué."

IN THE WOOD

THE sun struck through the still unriven trees upon earth, baked by a month of drying suns and torn into fantastic heaps and hollows by the hands of men and the burst of shells; for the wood had been the centre of a ten-days' struggle, and either side had hurled earth-shaking crumps into it, and had dug frantically little slit trenches to hide themselves from the death which was menaced by every whining shell. Now at last it was British, and save for a commodious dug-out here and there, and some torn grey equipment, no trace was left of the German occupation. The tall trees stood up parched and blasted by the hot breath of the explosions or lay where the explosions had struck them down; the fallen leaves were littered in the hollows, whence rose, if you disturbed them, an acrid smell of the gas launched over the wood four days before, and everywhere among the undergrowth and the fallen trees ran a network of narrow trenches and shallow burrows from which rose the sound of

talk and the smell of cooking, the resting-place of the supports who were to be ready that night to move up through the valley and sweep past a victorious front-line brigade into an enemy village two miles away.

All around the wood lay guns which barked occasionally; in front of it was the shell-torn "valley of death," with its grim windings—"dead man's corner" and "suicide corner"—up which all troops had to go and on which the German barrage was regularly laid twice or three times a day; not a blade of grass was to be seen in the valley, nothing but huge shell-holes and heaped-up earth, seamed with old and new trenches and littered with all the waste products of a battle, dead men's equipment and rifles, bombs and shell-cases, huge duds, and here and there the wreck of an ambulance or an ammunition-waggon which had been caught by German shells. Now the valley lay in its hideous squalor basking in the sun, while overhead droned an aeroplane—British it must be, of course.

A whistle sounded, and the men in the wood, who lay lazily watching the 'plane, looked round suddenly in alarm. It was a Bosche, was it? Well, wasn't that the limit? Most of them were young drafts and didn't understand, but the old hands enlightened them. The Bosche might spot them in that thinned wood, and if it did—well, they wouldn't do any harm if they

got down into a trench for a bit. All slipped down, while on the circling enemy above came rushing two British 'planes, driving him back to his own line. And the incident was apparently at an end. Men got out of their trench once more, and went about the business of the day. Rifles were inspected and bombs issued, for the attack would begin at six o'clock that evening, and they had to be ready to move at five. Runners crossed from Company to Company, officers moved among the burrows as they packed up. Their dinner-hour was just over, and the smoke of many pipes rose upon the air. A Subaltern came strolling across the open to his Company trench, a pipe in his mouth, and his kilt swinging jauntily.

Whee-ee-ee-errump ! The air was full of dust and smoke from a little way up the trench. The Subaltern had slid into the trench at the sound, with a rapidity very unlike his former stroll ; as he picked himself up—a large lump of earth had hit him in the chest—there came a rush of men away from the smoke towards him, and more crashes on his right and left. In the trees above he heard the vicious sound of bursting shrapnel.

" We'r trench is blown in on us," gasped a man running, with wild eyes, to some shelter—he knew not quite what.

Behind the Subaltern came a shout from another of his Company Mess.

"You can't let those men any farther up, Tagg. There's a dead end here; they've blown in our trench, and we'll have to dig some men out. Pass up tools."

"Can't get any farther, Murray," said MacTaggart the Subaltern, "get down—oh, Lord, here's another."

Another long-drawn whine was followed by a crash so close that the trench seemed to collapse though it was only loose earth falling. The Subaltern saw the mess dixie hurled into a bush, and the terrified man beside him darted his head into a little hole in the side of the trench. Over the Subaltern came the bombardment feeling; a sensation which mingles a curious numbness of all ordinary emotions with an abounding pride and a complete contempt for anybody more frightened than oneself; he turned slowly to the man and told him to take his head out of the hole.

"It'll come in on you if a crump drops near," he said, "and then you'll suffocate. Have a cigarette."

The man rejected the offer with scorn, as badly shell-shocked men will.

"Well, don't be so proud about it," said the Subaltern, "I wish I could find my pipe," and began to grope for it. The

men in the trench crouched listening for the whining to come near to them, and as it did, the Subaltern ceased looking for his pipe and listened with them. Along the trench came shouts from those digging out the buried men. A Corporal had got on top and was digging there unmindful of the shrapnel.

I don't know if I have given the impression that the Subaltern was a fearless young gentleman; but if so, it was not my intention. He was very afraid and most unwilling to die, and he showed it, if the men had only noticed, by his nervous movement of relief after each close burst. A somewhat vigorous self-control, combined with a very real pleasure in being so close to death and yet alive, enabled him to delude the privates; but inside he was quaking.

At last the barrage moved on to the other side of the wood and he rose up, suddenly remembering that he had not seen his Captain since it began. He hardly dared get out, so numb was his will, when he saw the Captain leap down into the trench.

"I was in the burrow," the big man explained, rather breathlessly, "so I stayed there. There's one chap killed, and one wounded just outside it, and a lot more farther along. I wonder where the stretcher-bearers are."

The Subaltern felt that he ought to get out, but somehow he couldn't. What if the barrage started again and caught

him in the open? He climbed out and stood on the edge ready to jump down again if another shell came. From the next trench stretcher-bearers moved towards him looking for wounded. Almost beside him a man lay in a dabble of blood; you would have thought him asleep until you saw half his head lying beside him cut neatly off by a big piece of shell. Farther over they had dug out the buried men, but only one was alive. The Corporal, who had worked so gallantly in the bombardment, collapsed suddenly with twitching hands and staring, frightened eyes, proclaiming the shell-shock he had held off while the work had to be done. Stretcher-bearers came, carrying broken moaning wounded. The Subaltern, shamed by their calm, braced himself and stepped into the open.

There he met another Sub. helping along a Captain, an old friend of his. MacTaggart greeted him cheerily, and was answered by a hopeless stare and a writhing mouth trying in vain to form words. The Captain was dumb.

"That last 8-inch burst almost on him," the other Subaltern explained. "All the men with him were killed, and he's got it badly. Come on now, Willie. It's all right now."

The dumb man mumbled piteously and cringed to the ground as a shell whined over. The two started to take him along to

the Aid Post, but every movement was a difficulty to his uncontrolled limbs, and every sound a torture to the bewildered brain. It was a long time before they got there, and when they did, the Aid Post was like a shambles with blood and wounded men. The two slung their friend down to the doctor, and went to report him a casualty at Headquarters next door. There the C.O. met them with operation orders for the attack that night, and a request that MacTaggart would take certain messages to other Companies. As they went in for a final farewell to the dumb Captain, he moaned and stretched forward his wavering hand for the orders, the last effort of a gallant spirit. Then they left him in the Aid Post, and went out to their work.

As MacTaggart crossed the open he was gripped with a sudden fear. The whining and the crash of the shells was coming nearer again, and he had two Companies to see before he could get back to his own burrow. He ran hastily over to the first Coy. H.Q., and then paused there, bracing himself for his next rush, for the barrage was on their lines again, although not so heavily. Out he ran and along to the next H.Q., fixing his mind on the job, and not allowing himself to think of shells, when a low shrapnel, beautifully timed, burst close beside him, knocking him over; picking himself

up he staggered to the trench and handed over the message, only conscious of a sudden quiet, for that shrapnel had been the last shell of the barrage. Then he found his mouth full of blood and his limbs weak and tottering. He was not wounded he knew; he supposed it must be shell-shock.

At Headquarters he reported the messages delivered, and got some opium from the doctor; in a dream he got rum, then his own men, and found new vigour in his limbs and ferocity in his mind. "Go down? I'm damned if I will," he muttered, and walked along the trench. The British barrage was on now, and the troops were all ready to move up.

"Will we get into them, sir?" men asked him as he walked along the top of the trench. "Will we get into the ———s with the bayonet?" They were flushed and excited with anticipation and rum, and MacTaggart wondered whether what was left of the old men would carry these raw boys on, or whether they would run and disgrace the regiment. He knew that they had lost a quarter of their strength in the barrage and mostly from his own Company; and he was too old a soldier to be reassured by this feverish talk about bayonets.

"Oh, we'll get into them all right," he said. "We'll give 'em a good deal for this afternoon, and we'll pay them all

right," but inwardly he was thinking of these boys moving up through another barrage, and his mind was full of foreboding.

In the trench he found the other officers, and knew they were thinking the same.

"The old hands ought to help them on," said his Captain doubtfully. "But I wish we hadn't lost so many to-day. It'll shake them a bit."

"What is to-day?" said MacTaggart inconsequently. "Sunday, isn't it?"

A voice from a private echoed his question a little way along. There was a buzz of conversation and suddenly a hush. The strong voice of a Sergeant was lifted up in the shaking lilt of an old Psalm tune.

"By God," breathed the Subaltern, as the other voices joined in. "They're the old gang yet."

He took me from the fearful pit
And from the miry clay,
And on a rock he set my feet,
Establishing my way.

The Psalm ended; another voice said, "I'll give you a grand one for this day, boy," and once again the strong rough voices rang out through the wood, grim earnestness in every tone:

Now Israel may say, and that truly
If that the Lord had not been on our side,
If that the Lord had not our cause maintained
When cruel men against us furiously
Rose up in wrath to make of us their prey.

A runner came to them with a message. The Captain read it, and stood up, shaking his equipment on to his shoulders.

From the valley beyond came the roar of the German barrage, but over it rose the psalm,

Therefore our trust is in the Lord his name,
Who heaven and earth by his own power did frame.

There was a sudden silence and a shout from the Captain. "Get on your equipment, men. We're to move up now," and the officers strolled along to their platoons with light hearts. Whatever happened they knew the men would follow them. The spirit of the regiment was still the same.

GOLD BRAID

In Memory of a Friend

"I THINK this was the place, Sirr," said the Sergeant, glaring through his periscope at the German trench sixty yards away. "It was on the parapet yonder—that he died, Sirr—was it not?"

His usually loud and hearty voice was hushed to that subdued tone in which the British soldier mentions the dead, and the Captain who stood beside him wondered why it should jar so. It wasn't as if the Sergeant didn't feel it, he thought—disgust at pretended reverence and emotion was natural and easy to understand—but he knew there was no veil of hypocrisy in this case for his candour to penetrate and his mind to revolt at. That hushed tone was offspring partly of pity for the dead man and partly of respect for his own grief at the loss of his friend, chiefly perhaps of reverence for an experience beyond the Sergeant's knowledge and for the human spirit which had faced it. It was his own damned fastidiousness

of mind that was wrong; always suspecting unreality subconsciously even when he knew it wasn't there. No, perhaps it was that fear and reverence of death that irritated; he had never been afraid of death—nor had old Andy.

"Don't put it in so high up, boys," he said. "They'll see it and knock this bay to hell." The men lowered the wooden cross till the position met with their officer's approval. He watched it sombrely—that little cross was all they had to show for Andy; that and memory. It was a good thing Andy didn't care about being buried properly and death and hell and all that rot.

He read the inscription again as the men wired it into position against the parapet.

IN MEMORY OF

LIEUT. ANDREW MACKAY

A CO. 1ST SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS

KILLED IN ACTION

IN THE GERMAN TRENCH

OPPOSITE THIS POINT.

His mind went back to that trench opposite this point three days ago—the yelling and the noise and the fierce excitement

of killing, and Andy—Andy with his arm and half his side torn off, telling him to take the others. Andy's lips telling them to leave him, but his eyes asking dumbly to be taken too. "I'm pretending to be damned brave, old man," the eyes had said, "and I hope the men believe me—but surely you can see what I want." He called himself a liar for thinking Andy hadn't been afraid to die. "I'm afraid, Tagg," the eyes had said, "afraid of dying here away among these bloody Bosches. Oh, take my body back anyway and bury me with my own people." He supposed those queer feelings he had always laughed at, were strongest in the end—and he hadn't been able to get the body in. Andy had died on the Bosche parapet and he'd had the wounded to bring in, and that was the end of it all. He would never see Andy again, never stumble into the dugout to talk the world over with him, never drink with him in the jolly old billet, nor argue about art and lose his temper with him—never—never again. He felt he could have given all the rest if only Andy had been left—damned selfish—but he wouldn't have cared. What a bloody war it was. What was the sense of it all? And he used to think war was good fun—but then Andy had been there to enjoy it with him. Why couldn't he die too?

"Look out, sirr," said a man, "oil can coming over." Instantly self-preservation reasserted itself. Gone was the mourner longing for death and peace; in his place a wary animal, alert and fearful, watched the falling bomb with rapid and instinctive calculation.

(*Unfinished*)

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A HIGHLAND REGIMENT

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